

October 5, 2020

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL URGES CONGRESS TO PROTECT SERVICE MEMBERS FROM TOXIC
"FOREVER" CHEMICALS**

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today joined a coalition of 20 attorneys general urging Congressional leadership to include protective provisions already passed by the House of Representatives in the final version of the fiscal year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

[In a letter](#), Raoul and the coalition call on Congressional committee leaders to protect service members, defense communities and the general public from PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) contamination associated with defense installations when they finalize the NDAA. The letter was sent to House Armed Services Committee Chairman Rep. Adam Smith and Ranking Member Rep. Mac Thornberry, along with Senate Committee on Armed Services Chairman Sen. James M. Inhofe and Ranking Member Sen. Jack Reed.

"Contamination resulting from these dangerous 'forever chemicals' is not easily remediated, and exposure is dangerous for the environment and public health," Raoul said. "Congress must act to protect our residents, particularly service members and those who live on and around military bases where these chemicals are more prevalent."

PFAS contamination in groundwater and surface water has been identified in areas near military installations. Exposure to PFAS has been shown to cause developmental defects, kidney cancer and liver damage, and negatively impacts the thyroid and immune system. PFAS chemicals are used in a variety of consumer products including nonstick cookware; waterproofing treatments for fabrics, carpeting and upholstery; food packaging; and firefighting foam. They are known as "forever chemicals" because PFAS chemicals do not break down easily in the environment

When the House of Representatives finalized its version of the NDAA, it included the following protective provisions that Raoul and the coalition are urging Congressional leadership to include in the final version:

- Limiting the information that can be shared with a patient visiting a Title X clinic.
- Prohibiting referrals for abortion, even when a patient specifically requests one.
- Mandating prenatal care for all patients, even if care is not requested.
- Prohibiting providers of Title X-funded services from being housed in facilities that also provide abortion care.

In 2019 Attorney General Raoul, with a coalition of attorneys general, [urged Congress to pass legislation](#) to help states address and prevent PFAS. Raoul has also [urged the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) to propose final drinking water standards for PFAS that reflect current science and protect public health.

Joining Raoul in submitting the letter are the attorneys general of Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Guam, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.